

9 August 1978

MEMORANDUM FROM: Chairman, IC Civil Space Policy Working Group

FROM:

SECOM Staff

SUBJECT: Space Policy Alternatives Paper for SPRC,
4 August Draft Report

1. (C) I have reviewed the 4 August 1978 draft report of the Space Policy Alternatives Paper for the Space Policy Review Committee and must say frankly that I am appalled at the fashioning of Section V, Satellite Reconnaissance Security Policy Alternatives. It strikes me as a proposal to sell SALT II above all else and reflects a tone far from what our working group on the "fact of" developed.

2. (C) To wit, we did not, as this draft reflects, believe that "There exists general concern among the general public that the SALT II agreement is unsound ..." (pg. 40 - Benefits and Risks). While on pg. 50 of the draft the paper reads that declassification of "fact of" could significantly improve the ability of government spokesmen to make an effective case for SALT II which would allay public concern, the working group felt that any increase in support for SALT II by the American people would be only marginal, even though it might be enough to ensure ratification. Also, we noted that "without public examples of data quality" there would be some question of the degree of public satisfaction on verifiability.

3. (C) On page 42, while noting the problems which might occur in the UN attendant to such declassification, the authors develop reasons why the Less Developed Countries (LDC) should acquiesce to the situation; e.g. arms control benefits, shared economic benefits from photo-satellite resource sensing in the future. While we recognize that and made the point of arms control in our paper, we noted that the LDC record of voting in the UN has been from a very narrow viewpoint. This sense gets lost in the page 42 reference and is watered down when presented again on page 49. As a matter of fact, on page 49, it is suggested that the LDCs may see it "in their interest to gain access to better quality imagery". We certainly didn't say that and the way it reads in the draft is suggestive that, if the policy maker wants to make points with the LDCs, this is an excellent bauble to dangle before them in a sales pitch.

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4. (C) In the area of International Considerations on page 46 The USSR we stated that if the Soviet turned down declassification of "fact of", "it would be unwise to proceed unilaterally with a policy change". The drafters have changed this to read "nor would it foreclose the opportunity for the U. S. to move unilaterally." Not only is this not the thesis presented, but proceeding with this newly concocted option seems foolhardy from the diplomatic standpoint.

5. (C) Under the heading Intelligence Security (pg. 47) the wordsmiths say that declassification of "fact of" alone could take place with the absolute refusal to release data. This is a complete turnaround of the original paper which says that it seems unlikely that it could take place without some release of information, whether inadvertent or on purpose.

6. (C) The revised paper, in the Intelligence Security section (pg 47) also notes that former senior members of the space intelligence must be briefed on the intended limits of disclosure; it drops off the concern that a gap will remain since there is no practical way to contact and brief lower level ex-members of the community to advise them of the new limits.

7. (U) The above comments are restricted to Section V. I feel that what has been prepared for presentation is a prostitution of the original paper and a disservice to policy-makers who will have to consider the problem. It presents a sweetness and light "no sweat" attitude which is highly unrealistic and the tone must be changed back to the more soberly developed thoughts of the original.

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